

REMARKS

Applicants are further amending the above-identified application, in this Supplementing Preliminary Amendment, by adding new claims 47-50 to the application. This Supplementing Preliminary Amendment further amends the above-identified application, supplementing the Preliminary Amendment filed January 23, 2001; the Supplemental Preliminary Amendment filed May 29, 2001; and the Further Supplemental Preliminary Amendment filed January 14, 2002.

All of the newly added claims 47-50 are independent claims, and define a vacuum processing apparatus or an apparatus for vacuum processing a substrate.

Note that claim 50 defines an apparatus having plural vacuum processing chambers, a transfer conveyor for carrying in the substrate into one vacuum processing chamber of the plural vacuum processing chambers, via one lock chamber selected from double lock chamber, this transfer conveyor carrying out the substrate processed in the vacuum processing chamber via another lock chamber of the double lock chambers, and the transfer conveyor returning the substrate from the other lock chamber of the double lock chambers to its original position in a cassette, of plural cassettes, in which the substrate is stored prior to processing thereof.

Claims 47 and 48 recite that the apparatus includes a plurality of cassette mount tables for mounting cassettes storing substrates, an atmospheric transfer device for transferring the substrates in an atmosphere, a plurality of vacuum processing chambers for processing the substrates, a load lock chamber for loading non-processed substrates from the atmosphere into the vacuum processing chambers, and an unload lock chamber for unloading processed substrates from the

vacuum processing chambers to the atmosphere, the plurality of cassette mount tables, load and unload lock chamber, and atmospheric transfer device, being further defined. Each of claims 47 and 48 recites that the atmospheric transfer device is capable of moving at least vertically; and that the processed substrate can be transferred from the unload lock chamber to the original location of the original cassette, in which of the substrates is stored prior to processing, through the atmospheric side gate valve of the unload lock chamber.

Claim 49 recites that the apparatus has a plurality of cassette mount tables for mounting cassettes storing substrates, an atmospheric transfer device for transferring the substrate in an atmosphere, a plurality of vacuum processing chambers for processing the substrates and double lock chambers either for loading non-processed substrates or for unloading processed substrates, the plurality of cassette mount tables, double lock chambers, and atmospheric transfer device being further defined. This claim 49 recites that the atmospheric transfer device is capable of moving at least vertically; and that the processed substrates can be transferred from the double lock chambers to the original locations of the original cassettes, in which the substrates are stored prior to processing, through an atmospheric side gate valve of the double lock chambers.

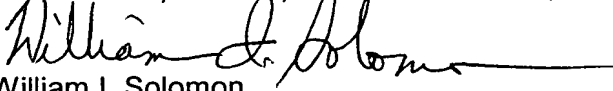
Entry of the present amendments, and, subsequent thereto, examination of the above-identified application in due course, are respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary, Applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR § 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing

of this paper, including extension of time fees, to the Deposit Account No. 01-2135
(Case No. 520.30414V22) and please credit any excess fees to such Deposit
Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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